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VOL. 2



CALGARY, MARCH 29, 1918

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No. 9

## THE STRETCHER BEARER

My stretcher is one scarlet stain,  
And as I tries to scrape it clean,  
I tell you wot,--I'm sick with pain  
For all I've 'eard, for all I've seen;  
Around me is the 'ellish night,  
And as the war's red rim I trace,  
I wonder if in 'Eaven's Height,  
Our God don't turn away 'is face.

I don't care 'ose the Crime may be;  
I holds no brief for kin or clan;  
I 'ymns no 'ate; I only see  
As man destroys 'is brother man;  
I waves no flag; I only know,  
As 'ere beside the dead I wait,  
A million 'earts is weighed with woe,  
A million 'omes is desolate.

In dripping darkness, far and near,  
All night I've sought them woful ones.

Dawn shudders up and still I 'ear  
The crimson chorus of the guns.  
Look! o' a ball of blood the sun  
'Angs o'er the scene of wrath and wrong--

"Quick! Stretcher-bearers on the run!"  
O Prince of Peace! 'ow long, 'ow long?

—Robert W. Service, in--  
"Rhymes of a Red Cross Man."

## GOD'S PURPOSES

By WHITTIER

"God's ways seem dark, but soon or late,  
They touch the shining hills of day:  
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DAVID ELTON, at the  
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The tearful protests at Ottawa of the  
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The steps taken by the Union Govern-  
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Thou shalt not foreclose a mortgage on a soldier's property.

Thou shalt not take away a soldier's home on which he has made part payment.

Thou shalt not sell a soldier's property because of his failure to pay the taxes, national, state or local.

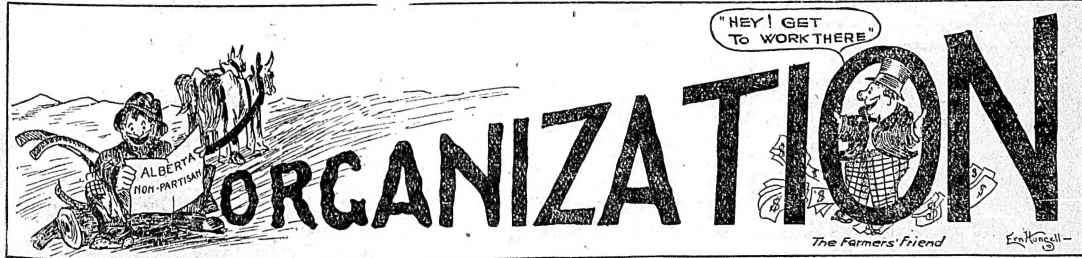
Thou shalt not settle a lawsuit against a soldier during his absence.

If a soldier sue, the courts shall postpone action until he can attend to it.

If a soldier have a mine, or timber or farm claim, assessments on which are overdue, it shall be held for him.

Honor thy soldier and thy sailor, that thy days may be long in the land of Liberty.

No man hath greater love than he that offereth his life for the world's sake, and it is commanded that neither lawyers, nor the loan-sharks, nor the gatherers of titles shall fatten on him.



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## CURRENT HISTORY

The Canadian Pacific Railway is to get its increase of freight rates. This is delightful. The Canadian Pacific has never asked for anything which it did not receive. Early in life this great institution learned the truth of the Bible adage, "Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you."—and if there is anything else you think of that you want, ask the Dominion Government, consult the Canadian people.

Financing the Canadian Pacific Railway has been one of the most interesting examples of high finance in the world. Eight times since 1902 the C.P.R. has watered its stock. Such generous injections of H.C.O. would have made that organization singularly flabby were it not for the kindness of the Canadian people who permit it to charge freight rates which enable it to pay dividends upon water.

The logical way of financing the Canadian Pacific Railway when it attained its financial stability as an investment should have been by the sale of bonds on the open market, but instead of that the C.P.R. sold to its shareholders, stock at par while that stock was selling in the open market at all the way from \$109 to \$226. You will readily see that if you are the owner of stock in the C.P.R. which you had purchased years ago at \$100 while the present market was \$226, and by virtue of your being a stock-holder you are allowed to purchase more at par, you would have "a right" which is of material value to you. These rights sold in the open market at varying prices. We recall no instance in which they were below \$3 per share and in some cases sold as high as \$15 per share. Computing the value of these rights on the various rake-offs which the C.P.R. put across between 1902 and 1913 and taking only the average value of the rights which were offered at that time, we have a total sum of \$88,149,000. This constitutes the injection of water into the body corporate of the Canadian Pacific Railway during the period mentioned.

The reward for this conduct on the part of the Railway is to give it an increased freight rate of 15 per cent., and for the sacrifice of taking over \$88,000,000 in the way of rake-offs we hand it the boon of this most worthy gift.

Ham Burnham suggests the abolition of titles in the Dominion of Canada. We suggest the retention of titles with the idea that some of these great corporations should be paid in titles instead of cash. Why not make the great corporations Knights or Barons or Lords?—Perhaps the honors received in this way might do as a substitute for cash. This would be a great advantage to the Canadian People.

Some of the land owners adjacent to the City of Calgary are very anxious that their taxes should be paid by anybody else except themselves. These men have been going to the Government year after year and pleading their cause with a patience and fidelity to their own interests, which, if directed to the larger National sphere, would have placed the Dominion of Canada in a very happy and prosperous condition indeed. Getting it right down to bed rock, it amounts to this: "These land owners made a gamble in land and if it had succeeded they would have rolled in fat and we poor mortals should have turned the corners of this little city in the dust of their big automobiles. Unfortunately things do not work out that way and now they turn round to that ready giver of all good and perfect gifts, namely, the Gov-

ernment, and ask that their blindness be forgiven them and that they should have another opportunity to try something over again. Nothing doing! If the Government of the Province of Alberta interferes in this matter, Calgary should hold it against that government until the coming date of the next election and then drive it from power for refusing to mind its own business. If the outside land owners can have their taxes forgiven as the sinner has his sins forgiven, the same doctrine should apply to every tax-payer and nobody should pay taxes and then everybody would be happy.

One of the arch offenders in this is Dr. A. O. MacRae. The Reverend Presbyterian Divine in an article in a paper some time ago actually had the nerve to suggest that the Western Canada College should not pay taxes because so many of the students who graduated from that institution had laid down their lives in the defense of the Empire. What—ho, Doctor! Do you send out this message when you ask for students for your College? Do you point out to the mother who is about to commit her son to your care, that among other advantages of the institution which you direct, he may have the advantage of laying down his life at the front thus enabling you to avoid paying taxes? This is just about as cold blooded a proposition as we have ever seen in the public print and it is an astonishing thing that we should have in this age when privilege is not supposed to have a strangle hold upon us, a man who has the audacity to hold stoutly to the idea of special privilege for a saintly few. It would be very interesting to hear the defense which Dr. MacRae may have to make to this proposition and I am quite sure that THE ALBERTA NON-PARTISAN would be glad to give him space.

\* \* \*

Greater production is still the cry. Despite the fact that a terrible conflict wages in Europe, we are not without those who try to carry out the scheme by means of suggesting that land should be purchased from the present holders at market prices, and that the Government should lend money to the people to purchase it in that way. From the standpoint of the land selling plutocrats, this is an excellent suggestion, but from the standpoint of common sense it is about as silly and ridiculous as anything could be. The school lands in Alberta and Saskatchewan available for settlement amount to over fourteen million acres, but the Government does nothing in regard to this. They are to be sold. That means they are to be kept out of use until people have money enough to purchase. This helps to hold the monopoly of land in Western Canada. If these lands were turned loose it might hurt speculators, but it would increase prosperity in Western Canada. It would be the greatest move that could be made for the welfare of the West. Perhaps the new Union Government will consider this. But the new Union Government is considering nothing except hanging onto its job. The crackers and sardines of office are particularly attractive to the aggregation of men who first secured office by a franchise which was the most despicable and contemptible deal ever perpetrated upon the people. We wonder what Newton W. Rowell really thinks of it in his sober moments. It has been a question if Wesley ever thinks. He has been the most persistent and searching seeker after office in Canada in the last ten years. Murphey defined him very clearly a few days ago. Murphey is not a very perfect saint himself, but he got there just the same. Perhaps after all it takes—not exactly an angel to catch a man of the Rowell type.

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## The "Cheap Money" Question

WHY WE DO NOT HAVE CHEAP MONEY

By W. K. BALL, Deer Mound, Alta.

I think all those who have read my article in the last issue of the NON-PARTISAN admit that the West has suffered a great injustice at the hands of the Government, and that it has played into the hands of the big interests. But of course the common people are to blame.

There are three reasons why the people do not get a square deal. One is because they do not think for themselves but allow others to do it for them, and do not know what they are entitled to, forgetting that if they are too lazy to think for themselves they will be slaves of those that do. Having no opinion of their own they allow the big interests to mould it for them through the medium of the press, politicians, and we must admit, the pulpits too. With a few exceptions they do not know that the Newspapers are practically all owned by the big interests, which are the railroads, banks, manufacturing, etc.

They forget that the money borrowed from the banks and the loan companies are the profits from the railroads, manufacturing, insurance companies, etc., and that when we agitate for cheap money we have all these interests to fight. The ministers dare not preach against usury when those who are the recipients of incomes at eight to ten per cent. interest and watered stock are largely those who give the most liberally to the church and are those they have to look to for their support, many of them have told me that they are just as radical as I am and that I do not go too far, but they dare not preach their views because it would break up the church. Usury is condemned in the Bible from Genesis to Revelations and Jesus has used the most bitter language condemning it, stating, that "He that taketh the bread gotten by sweat is like unto him that killeth his neighbor," and remember the Methodist discipline states plainly that no one is eligible for membership who receives an income from usury and they define usury as all interest over a lawful or State interest, but at the same time some of their most prominent members have piled up immense fortunes by charging ten and twelve per cent. interest while the lawful interest is only five or six per cent.

The church is chloroformed by the large gifts from these men. Jesus says, "I am the light of the world and in me there is no darkness." If the Politicians and those

who make our laws were guided by that light it would smash all the Trusts and Combines in Canada, yes, and in the wide world. Then there is the other class, those who have knowledge but yet are indifferent and do not put forth any effort, claiming that while we have all these big interests to fight that it would be time and labor spent in vain and content themselves, with bearing the heavy burdens and giving all their attention to doing the best they can under the circumstances.

The newspapers, politicians, and preachers do not decide them, they have no use for the church, they know the preachers are muzzled by the big interests. Then there are those who for selfish interests are satisfied with conditions as they are; some of them may not have any money to loan out, they may be farmers or merchants who are thinking of selling out and living on their money, so they hope to profit by high interest, and there are those who are receiving immense incomes from high rates. Take for instance the interest on \$100,000 at eight per cent. is \$8,000.00 but some have \$1,000,000 out on interest at eight per cent., netting an income of \$80,000. So you see we have a big fight on. But man was made for difficulties and the world loves a fighter. In my next letter I will try to point out how we can secure cheap money.

\* \* \*

## FORCE OR REASON.

There are two ways of dealing with tumult and discord. One by forcible suppression, the other by patient persuasion and instruction. The obviously right and safe way to combat perilous mischief is to take the people into confidence. Nothing has unsettled our workers so much as vaunting promises of coming offensives and victories which never come off. Instead of delusions, the people should have had the plain, sobering truth. They should have been told the formidable might of the menace that threatened them, the difficulties of the defence against it, the seriousness of the danger of defeat, and the disastrous consequences to democratic liberties and well-being which defeat would bring. Frankness and trust from the beginning would have prevented nearly all the discontent which has been allowed and encouraged to grow. In their direct dealings with industrial revolt the government has alternately bullied and cringed which is obviously not conducive to national discipline nor trust in the government.—A. M. THOMPSON.

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"There is no wealth but life. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings."—Ruskin.

**N.P.L.** The Second Annual CONVENTION Convention of the Non-Partisan League recently held in Calgary was highly successful. The number present was very encouraging, being, we believe, very much larger than either of the old parties could gather together when there is no election in sight. It speaks well for the interest and enthusiasm of the League members that they devoted so much of their time and money to attend to public affairs.

The spirit of the Convention throughout was such as we believe has never been equalled in the Province of Alberta, nor perhaps in any other part of the Dominion. Here are found men and women gathered at their own expense to consider the public welfare. The discussion and debate in convention were on a high level corresponding to the spirit mentioned.

The most interesting feature of the proceedings was the financial report so ably presented and explained in detail by M. E. Sly. By this report the N.P.L. has issued a challenge to the old line parties which they dare not accept in their present position. The election expenses is one of the main factors of corruption in Canadian politics, and sooner or later a detailed account must be furnished by every political organization showing the amount spent, and the source from which it came. We believe the N.P.L. is on the right track in this

matter of finance as well as in its economic and political outlook.

The League takes up the work of the second year of its life with great assets in the shape of experience and influence, and will spread more rapidly in the coming months than at any time previously. It will continue its educational propaganda and organization and will never falter until democracy is safe for Alberta.

\* \* \*

### THE VETERAN

"The Veteran," the official organ of The Great War Veteran's Association, published in Ottawa, is a monthly journal of great merit, and we believe it is destined to be a potent factor in the future industrial and political life of Canada. Its tone is high and its criticism so far is fearless, and we may be sure that if it reflects the spirit of the Canadian soldier it will continue to be fearless.

"The Veteran" confesses that it is disappointed in the Government, and says that we can no longer have faith in the pre-election speeches of candidates. It points out that the promised civil service reforms are very unsatisfactory, and mentions several cases where political appointments have been made since the election which violates every principle of fairness.

It is encouraging to note that the Veterans through their mouth-piece have expressed their lack of faith in political promises, although the circumstances leading to their enlightenment may be regrettable. The present government owes its life to the Veterans, many of whom made election speeches and helped along the promising. There are also returned veterans in the House of Commons who surely might be expected to launch a protest against the patronage appointments objected to by the "Veteran."

We believe that the soldiers generally voted for the Union Government because they believed conscription was necessary, but that the soldiers have no brief for this or any other government that disregards the issues upon which it was elected. So it may happen that the Union Government may be kicked out as heartily as it was hauled in, if it fails to grasp the opportunity for real national service which is afforded it. If the returned men, organized as they are, keep free from partyism and walk the straight and narrow way of Non-Partisans they will aid greatly in bringing back a sense of morality in our public life and in establishing the principles of democracy in Canada.

### THE RETURNED SOLDIER PROBLEM

There is no doubt that the problem of assimilation of our returned soldiers into civil life will be the greatest task to be undertaken after the war, and unless intelligent preparation is made to meet the inevitable difficulties, industrial chaos will ensue. There will be a very serious dislocation in our industrial life caused by the cessation of production in certain lines made necessary by the war; we shall also have to reckon with the fact that a great number of women have taken up industrial pursuits in the place of men who have gone to the front, and these women will necessarily either have to retain their present positions or have other provision made for their employment, in either case something must be done to meet the demands of the situation.

Not the least important phase of the situation will be the difficulty of placing a partly disabled man under a system of competition. Business men even though as loyal as they claim to be, will be unable to employ any but the most expert and the absolutely fit in their struggle in the business world. Their sentiments may be with the soldier, but their ultimate action will be determined by their own interests.

In view of these conditions it would seem that the Government must in some way assume the burden of the returned soldier problem in its entirety. The state must become responsible for all who have been in any way incapacitated in the fight for the state, while each returned man should have an opportunity to do service in peaceable occupation to the full extent of his ability. It would seem that there is no practical scheme by which the returned soldier will escape the old time competition for a job. Surely if the best brains at the head of public affairs would take this question seriously a solution that would be fair to the soldiers and creditable to Canada could be found.

\* \* \*

### THE PEACE RIVER SOLUTION

So far the only practicable suggestion by the Government a n e n t the soldier problem is unfair to the returned men, and in any case would only accommodate those who might desire to farm. It is estimated that a very small percentage will desire to take up land, and perhaps none would want to go into the back woods to do so. But a proper solution of the land question would relieve the pressure in the cities and towns, and would go a considerable distance

toward the solution of the after-war industrial problem. There are many men in cities to-day who would gladly go on to the land if they could obtain holdings near enough to a railroad to make it profitable to farm. As it is now any government land that is open for homesteading is out of all reach of markets, while the pick of our agricultural lands is being held at a high figure by speculators.

Now there are over seven million acres of school lands in the Province of Alberta alone, while some of the other provinces have similar acreages. These lands are within settlements, are good and would be readily utilized were the opportunity offered. We would urge that the Government sell no more of this land, but that it be leased for use at a rental value of five per cent. of its capitalization.

The value of such a scheme is obvious. In the first place this would provide a perpetual source of income for educational purposes and would thus fulfil the function for which the school lands were set aside. In the second place it would immediately bring down the value of land held by speculators and draw thousands of families away from the cities, thus leaving a greater opportunity for our returned veterans to secure positions as clerks, stenographers, etc.

The policy to be followed with regard to the land question is twofold. The Government must hold on to the land that it has, and secure the land held for speculative purposes as soon as possible. The first part of this policy could be carried out in the manner above suggested, while the securing control of the vast areas of land held by speculators would call for a different line of action. Regarding this we would take the position that it would be criminal to allow any person to reap the social land values in such times as these. On the other hand it is well to adhere as far as possible to the rights of contracts. A fair proposition would therefore be for the Government to buy back all unused land at the original price allowing the average bank interest from the day of purchase by the present holders to date of Government appropriation, and lease these as well as the school lands on the same principle as New Zealand and South Australia.

It is not patriotic to force our returned men who may desire to farm, away back into no man's land. They have had enough of that already. Let's have Government ownership of land, and good jobs for every citizen as an after-war slogan.

## PRINCIPLE VERSUS EXPEDIENCY

"The ramifications of the Workmen's Compensation Act now proposed for Alberta are so wide that every employer of labor should carefully scan the measure to see if it affects him and to what extent. It is good legislation in principle, but requires to be carefully drafted."

The above editorial reference from that doughty champion of the big interests, the Calgary "Daily Herald," sums up pretty well the attitude of our controlled Press by legislation likely to curtail the power of industrial corporations in the attainment of their supreme object—dividends. The reader will notice that while it is admitted that the principle involved is sound a subtle suggestion is thrown out to employers of labor to rally their forces and see that the "defenders of the faith" within the house draft the bill in vague and legal phraseology so that the sting is removed and the legislation rendered as innocuous as possible.

We hope that the labor forces are alive to the importance of this measure and will be ready through their representative in the legislature, Alex Ross, to expose and block any attempt by lawyer politicians at "camouflage" in drafting this bill.

\* \* \*

## SELF GOVERNMENT

Sir Henry  
Campbell -  
Bannerman

once said "self-government was better than good government." Mrs. Annie Besant, at the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta, has claimed that "self-government is necessary to the self-respect and dignity of a people." "It is the national instinct of all free peoples, the feeling of inherent right to self-determination; the right to be themselves. It was a great injury to deprive India of her birthright of freedom."

Mrs. Besant spoke as president of the great native congress, attended by over 4,000 delegates, and her speech was a strong statement of the case for Indian self-government. She urged the Indian people had a sense of the value of their own civilization, of a pride in their past, which had created self respect in the present and confidence in the future. "India is no longer on her knees for boons; she is on her feet for rights." "The English in India misunderstand me and call me seditious, but it is because I have taught this that I am president of this congress to-day."

Her message is one that cannot be ignored. As president she is the voice of India, a strongly compelling voice. The war is being fought for the purpose of destroying autocracy and to establish the God-given right to self-rule and self-development of every nation.

Britain will have to face this Indian problem in the near future if her protestations for the right of self-government for independent peoples are sincere.

\* \* \*

## THE NEXT FRANCHISE BILL

Although we have not seen the new Franchise bill which is said to give every Canadian woman a vote on the same basis as men, we believe it will be more worthy of a Canadian statesman than the last franchise act. But it is not likely that the women who were not considered worthy to vote a few months ago will forget the humiliation involved. They have already learned that politicians who tinker up the franchise act to secure their own election are unworthy to be trusted with the affairs of a democracy. The rejected half of Canada's women will vote at the next election. We wonder if they will vote for the Union Government?

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## THE SOCIALIST AND THE NON-PARTISAN MOVEMENT

WILL HOLMES

Socialism has been acceptably described as "the collective ownership and control of the means of production, distribution and exchange." Unfortunately the believers in this simple formula have allowed themselves to split on questions of class-struggle, economic determinism, theology and a thousand other things more or less irrelevant, until we have to-day as many different types of socialist as we have different types of Christian people who believe enthusiastically in collective ownership as ashamed to be classed as socialist for theological reasons, as if that had anything to do with it. Many of us are not socialists because someone, who has appropriated to himself a place of authority in socialism, says we are not, just as some of us who believe profoundly in the character of Jesus are not Christians because someone with a corner on authority in religious matters says we are not. But so far as I know the above formula is one on which all socialists agree, they only differ on the means of bringing it about.

There are two great classes of Socialists. One known as "Direct Actionists," as represented in the I.W.W., who believe that the problem will find its solution on the industrial plane by a deliberate and organized appropriation of the means of production, etc. Such means having been rendered useless by a universal strike that would paralyze industry and thus the means of production to become of value would have to be handed over as a gift to the labor forces. But by far the largest body of socialists are those who adopt the means of political action to attain their ends on the grounds that all private property is under legislative protection, and its ownership lies just where legislation puts it.

A sharp distinction must be kept in mind between collective ownership and Government ownership. Government ownership cannot be collective ownership until the Government represents collective society. The Government ownership of railways will not deliver the people from the bondage of the wage system. Wages will still be determined by the law of supply and demand. Freight and passenger rates will still be fixed at the highest point where dividends will accrue. Profits will be used to decrease taxes to the people who are subject to direct taxation under the Dominion Government and the public will be in the same position as before. In fact the people might find themselves better off under private ownership because of the increase of efficiency in private corporations. Only when the railway is operated to give the public a maximum of service at a minimum of expense, consistent with adequate protection for the laborers employed in the operation, will collective ownership have any advantages.

There can be no socialism therefore, without the principles laid down in the Non-Partisan platform, viz.: "Ownership of the Government by the people." The first logical step for the socialist to take is to ally himself with the Non-Partisan movement. Of course the fanatical type will not do this because he says, "It is impossible to cater to two classes in society. Either the Non-Partisan is for capital or against it, and if against it then let us call ourselves Socialist. But the Non-Partisan movement is for the people. If the people

are nine-tenths labor then the Non-Partisan movement is nine-tenths labor. Surely when we get on that basis the other truth is easy to handle.

The Non-Partisan Movement is the first logical step for the socialist but it is only the first step. We are not a socialistic organization because we are an organization of the people and the people have not given us any mandate to adopt pure, unadulterated socialism. We are just as socialistic as our numbers make us. When you vote Non-Partisan you vote for what the people want and not for what some clique may decide is good for them.

We are, however, a working-class movement. Not one capitalist so far as we know has espoused our cause. The principle wrapped up in Non-Partisanship is a principle upon which every workingman, whether he be socialist, nationalist, or imperialist can agree. It is the common ground of working humanity. Here and here alone we can accept or reject as much imperialism or nationalism as we like and we can take as big a chunk of socialism as we can digest and if we develop an appetite we can go the limit. Why need we have any political division among the working class?

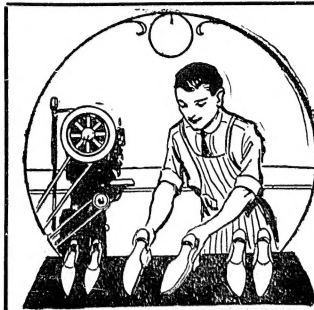
Reconstruction days are ahead of us. Either we are going to see a newer and fiercer capitalistic rule than ever or we are going to see the triumph of labor. The forces that divided are the forces that will go down to defeat. Such as it is let us adopt the only plane on which we can agree. Let us find out our own interests and agree on all points and thus stand impregnable for the utopia of our highest dreams which may shortly be ours if we can agree to accept it.

Editor's Note:—"Will Holmes" will contribute an article to our next issue on "The Church in Politics." The writer is keenly interested in social problems, a radical thinker, and fearless in his criticism of all that he believes to be inimical to the best interest of the Canadian people. His articles will be welcomed by all students of Canadian problems.

\* \* \*

## INCOME TAX FROM WAGES

For 1916-17 on a gross assessment of 202 million pounds, Mr. Bonar Law stated three million had been raised. Out of one and a half million workers with incomes above the exemption limit, 870,000 had been exempted as a result of statutory abatements. This left but 630,000 taxed and these cold statistics should dispose of the wild cat stories current of huge earnings of the wage-earners!



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## Our Members in the Legislature

### WHAT THE LEGISLATURE IS DOING

By Mrs. McKinney, M.L.A.

Edmonton, March 25th, 1918.

Last week at the Legislature was one of unusual interest. The Committees were kept exceedingly busy with their work and several interesting bills and resolutions were under discussion. The estimates were brought down and the budget speech was made by the Provincial Treasurer. One of the resolutions was that introduced by Mr. Ewing of the Opposition, asking for an investigation of the Police Commission. While the resolution was voted down by the Government side of the House, yet the discussion will doubtless be fruitful of much good as it brought to light many facts that the Government cannot afford to ignore, particularly in regard to the non-enforcement of the Liquor Act.

A Resolution regarding the care of the feeble minded was introduced by the writer of this article and a most interesting discussion followed during which the Provincial Secretary announced the policy of the Government on this question. It is proposed this year to establish a home to take care of the worst cases of feeble-minded children and to give a special grant to cities where the School Board undertakes to form auxiliary classes for retarded children. For the present this is all the work to be undertaken but a definite promise is given that more comprehensive measures will be considered in the near future.

The Rural Hospitals Bill has received its third and final reading and awaits the consent of His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, before becoming law. The Supplementary Revenue Bill is nearing the same stage and before this goes to print will have finally passed, as will, doubtless, several other important measures.

If any of our readers would at any times care to have copies of any of the bills passed they can be furnished on application. Indeed we will be only too glad to give all possible information if we know where such information is desired.

One of the Bills which would probably be of interest to all of our readers is one to provide for a system of highways for the Province. This has not come up for discussion yet but on the face of the bill it seems to provide for a more satisfactory method of dealing with the matter of road construction and maintenance than has hitherto been adopted. The only Bill to receive the Royal assent thus far is the Bill to enable municipalities to borrow money to provide seed grain for farmers, and some of us witnessed for the first time the interesting but brief ceremony of the Lieutenant-Governor coming in person to the House and formally giving his consent to a Bill.

The Budget speech revealed the fact that this year we have a deficit of about \$200,000, and the estimates show that the amounts to be voted total a little over 2½ million dollars. In a later article we will probably refer to this last item again. The debate on the Budget speech is now in progress but will likely close to-night.

All hope of finishing before Easter is now abandoned and the general opinion is that the Session will last till about the middle of April.

—LOUISE C. MCKINNEY.

### WHY THE SESSION IS PROLONGED

By Jas. Weir, M.L.A.

The futility of the conference at Ottawa and the 18-day adjournment of the Assembly is being borne in upon the members with especial emphasis in these spring days when the farmer members want to get home to the urgent Production Campaign. That eighteen days would have completed the session. To-day (Monday), the programme stands: 14 Bills not printed, five Government motions and 17 acts for committee of the whole House.

Some members of the Government would like to leave the impression that the delay of the House can be laid at the door of the Opposition or the Independents, but the above record should effectually dispel this notion. The Government's programme never was in order, is not now in order, and unless there develops more unanimity among the Government members the session may last a month longer. The Bill to re-organize the civil service is one that will surely cause some contention, and nothing is surer than that the House will be divided on the Supplementary Revenue Tax, and the estimates, where the real spot light of criticism will be turned on the several departments which will take some days. There is a probability that the House will adjourn Thursday evening until, perhaps, Wednesday next. Some members are inclined to think that the adjournment should be made to May 10th, in order to allow the farmer members to get on with their seeding, but the Government wants to get through if possible.

An outstanding incident of the week was the receipt by several members of postal cards from an anonymous source, containing insolent personal references. The member for Nanton arose in his seat and paid his respects to the purveyor of the cards, in vigorous language. The man who would send an anonymous card or letter was acting the same as the man who hides behind a hedge and takes a pot shot at the one he fears to meet in the open. The respectable member of the House, the well-bred gentleman is ever ready to break a sword point in intellectual combat, but he leaves the peddling of stale calumnies to those who prefer that kind of ammunition. The card was meant to sting but acted like a boomerang on the author. The speaker promised to take the matter up next day. On Friday, however, the nigger in the woodpile was discovered and the speaker at once directed the premier to appoint a committee to deal with the matter.

Immediately the fat was in the fire, and although twenty-four hours had elapsed in which to make his apology, the member for Acadia, John A. McColl, then hunted up the member for Nanton and claimed the whole thing to be a joke. The member for Nanton, as in duty bound, accepted the apology and the incident closed, except for the fact that later on it leaked out that one of these "jokes" had been perpetrated upon the member for Claresholm. Whatever liberties the male members may take with one another, the man calling himself a man, who sends an anonymous card to a woman doesn't, to say the least, show either good breeding or manliness.

The outcome of the incident, however, is that there will be no more such cheap jokes in the House at this or any other session from Mr. McColl.

The Supplementary Revenue Tax used up an afternoon and met with vigorous opposition in every detail throughout the discussion. That the tax is very unpopular throughout the Province is shown by the correspondence reaching members of the Opposition and the Independents. In this regard it is remarkable that the interested electors throughout the country are sending their protests to members of the Opposition and to Independent members, showing the constantly growing lack of confidence in followers of the Government, by believing that their party servility leaves no hope of the interests of the public receiving much consideration from that quarter.

The outstanding speech of the week was delivered by Mrs. McKinney on the subject of provision for the feeble-minded in the Province. Earlier in the session the Minister of Education treated the subject with levity but when the member for Claresholm got through with the subject the Government agreed with considerable alacrity to make a vote for the purpose mentioned and to make a start at once along the lines indicated.

\* \* \*

### TO OUR READERS

This little paper was not established to make money, but to carry the message of hope and struggle for better economic and political conditions in Canada. Every week we receive many letters of approbation and the "Non-Partisan" is fast becoming the most popular little journal in the Province.

Before another convention comes round we want to double its present size. But to have a bigger paper costs money; we should have more advertising revenue. The paper does not now carry the amount of advertising its circulation and its standing with its readers justify. This is where you can help.

Our advertising columns will never control our editorial columns, and our advertisers who stay with us know that. Therefore because these men and firms are honest enough not to endeavour to control our political views we ask our readers to patronize the merchants who use our columns for their advertising. We only want fair consideration from our advertisers and we believe they only want to be fair to the farmer.

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## APPRECIATION!

### READ THE CONVENTION REPORTS

In this issue we are giving full accounts of the Annual Convention of the League, and the reports and financial statement presented to the Convention.

Every member (and also others) should read these reports carefully as they present practically a record of the Non-Partisan movement since its

inception in this Province. It has been no easy fight to establish it, and much hard work is still before us. We will gladly answer any enquiry on any point not made clear, or give any information desired. We court the fullest investigation.

Also, several articles and letters are held over from this issue on account of space being taken, but which will appear in our next number.

### THE NON-PARTISAN POLITICAL LEAGUE OF ALBERTA

#### BALANCE SHEET

December 31st, 1917.

#### Liabilities

Members' fees, fully paid members (2733).....	\$ 40,552.28
Postdated checks (124).....	1,855.00
Returned cheques (276).....	4,162.72
	<u>\$ 46,570.00</u>
Donations.....	20.00
	<u>\$ 46,590.00</u>
Interest on Savings Account.....	15.06
Outstanding cheques.....	967.31
Creditors, per list.....	2,706.85
Credits held over.....	45.00
	<u>\$ 50,324.22</u>

#### Assets

Postdated cheques on hand ...	\$ 1,855.00
Other cheques .....	45.00
Bills receivable .....	5.00
Savings Bank (on deposit).....	2,015.06
Autos (11).....	\$ 5,138.00
Less 10 per cent.....	513.80
	<u>\$ 4,624.20</u>
Less, received from organizers' commissions .....	826.00
	<u>3,798.20</u>
Debtors, per list ...	605.76
Less estimated depreciation .....	200.00
	<u>405.76</u>
Office fittings.....	77.05
Returned cheques on hand ....	4,162.72
	<u>\$ 12,363.79</u>
By expenditure .....	37,960.43
	<u>\$ 50,324.22</u>

#### Expended

Commissions paid ..	\$ 15,196.92
Commissions on post-dated and returned cheques ..	2,417.08
	<u>\$ 17,614.00</u>
Elections (Federal).....	6,794.30
Elections (Provincial) .....	1,109.05
Office expenses:	
Secretary's salary, Wm. Irvine ..	327.50
Do., J. H. Ford ..	1,050.00
Salaries, office staff .....	1,367.85
Rent, stationery, etc.....	910.71
	<u>3,656.06</u>
Newspapers.....	1,624.16
Printing .....	1,473.95
Meetings .....	1,719.50
Executive expenses .....	894.95
J. W. Leedy .....	625.00
Phones and Telegraphs .....	351.50
Exchange and protests .....	362.80
Postage .....	435.90
Wear and tear of autos .....	319.80
Advertising .....	137.32
Law costs .....	100.00
Licenses .....	25.00
Interest and discount.....	3.34
	<u>\$ 37,246.63</u>
Depreciation on autos .....	\$ 513.80
Doubtful debts ....	200.00
	<u>713.80</u>
	<u>\$ 37,960.43</u>

# Non-Partisan League Annual Convention

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

To the Members of the

Non-Partisan League, Alberta:

On December 2nd, 1916, five interested persons came together in Calgary and determined to launch the Non-Partisan movement in Alberta. Forming themselves into a provisional committee, subscribing membership fees to form the nucleus of a fund, arrangements were made to commence propaganda work in the Province.

M. E. Sly, of Strathmore, was chosen provisional president, and Wm. Irvine, of Calgary, agreed to act as secretary and lecture for the League wherever meetings could be held. After a few weeks organizing was commenced and when about two hundred had been signed as members, and fees paid, it was decided to call a convention to approve of the constitution, and elect an Executive to carry on the work of the League. This was held in Calgary on February 14th, 1917, and Messrs. J. W. Wilford (Stavely), E. E. Sparks (Jenner), Lee Wilson (Barons), H. W. Johnson (Alderson), J. C. Buckley (Gleichen), and M. E. Sly (Strathmore), were elected as a committee with power to add to their number. H. A. McGlenning (Pincher Creek) and S. T. Marshall (Claresholm) have since been added, Lee Wilson being chosen to act as chairman.

Soon after the convention, Mr. J. W. Leedy came into the movement, and took an active part in propagating the aims of the League. Organization went slowly and with the aim of securing more members it was decided to lower the fee to \$8. Farmers were sceptical, but despite the difficulties steady headway was made. A series of meetings was arranged in different constituencies. Messrs. Sly and McGlenning made a tour of Pincher Creek, and Wm. Irvine and H. W. Johnson addressed a series of meetings in the Gleichen, Nanton and Claresholm constituencies.

Towards the end of May the provincial election was announced. Immediately conventions of the members were arranged for in the four constituencies where organizing work had been commenced—Nanton, Claresholm, Gleichen and Pincher Creek. At each convention the members decided to place a candidate in the field, even though no effective organization, practically, existed. The enthusiasm of the members knew no bounds, and for the first time in the history of Alberta the evils of Partyism were assailed, and the gospel of independence preached in a political campaign. Local committees were formed and the difficulties faced in a determined spirit. The four candidates chosen, Mrs. McKinney for Claresholm, James Weir for Nanton, J. E. Hillier for Pincher Creek, and J. W. Leedy for Gleichen, at once made progress, and the aims of the League met with hearty approval.

The League was severely handicapped through the Secretary, Wm. Irvine, being adopted Labor candidate for South Calgary, and was unable to render any effective assistance throughout the campaign. The present Secretary took over the duties temporarily.

In Claresholm and Nanton, where the membership was strongest, success for the league was achieved. A splendid fight was also made in Pincher Creek, where organizing had only been commenced a few weeks. In Gleichen the candidate, though not being a resident, and not known in the constituency, polled sufficient votes to prove that any constituency could be captured when properly organized.

The League was thus directly responsible for the election of the first woman to any Legislature in the Dominion of Canada, and the first direct farmers' representatives to the Provincial Legislature. This success undoubtedly laid the foundation of a movement which contains potentially democratic and economic emancipation for the people, and it also caused a remarkable change of tone and attitude towards the movement from both Party Press and Politicians.

A deficit in the funds of the League was faced after the election, but with the success achieved your Executive decided to make determined efforts to push the organization ahead. The lower fee had been tried and found "wanting,"—no increase in membership had resulted, and it was decided to revert to the \$15 fee until such time as the funds of the League would safely permit of its being lowered again.

During July active work in the field was again taken up, and efforts made to get together a staff of organizers. Early in August, H. W. Johnson took charge as head organizer, and in view of the approaching Federal elections, power was given him to conduct an aggressive campaign for members. It was found absolutely necessary to provide means of transportation for organizers to cover the territory allotted to them, and the purchase of autos was left to a small sub-committee, arrangements being made for deductions from commissions allowed to the organizers for their use.

By invitation, Mr. Leedy in July had gone north to the Victoria riding, and through July and August addressed a series of meetings at the most important points. On August 22nd, at a convention held in Camrose, Mr. Leedy was adopted candidate, and at once encountered some very bitter opposition from G. P. Smith, the adopted Liberal candidate, who had anticipated a walk-over. Later on, Mr. Smith, accepting a position in the Provincial Cabinet, the local Executive of the League determined to endorse the Independent candidature of James Miner for the Camrose Provincial Constituency, who succeeded, after ten days' campaign, in polling over eleven hundred votes.

On the Federal election being announced, conventions of members were called for Bow River and Macleod ridings, and in East Calgary it was decided to co-operate with the Labor Representation League. The members again decided to enter the fight. D. H. Galbraith of Vulcan being adopted candidate for Bow River, and S. T. Marshall of Claresholm for the Macleod riding. Wm. Irvine was also adopted as Non-Partisan Labor candidate for East Calgary.

The League candidates were not successful. The Win-the-War and Conscription issues succeeded in diverting the attention of the electors from the principles laid down in the program of the League. A good clean fight was made in each riding, and the movement obtained some good publicity, its aims being explained at a large number of well-attended meetings. Except for the abnormal issues involved in the campaign the League would have had good chances of success, it being generally recognized that the organization had the best candidates in the field.

None, except those engaged, can measure the difficulties of election campaigns in November and December. The exceptionally severe weather encountered added to the difficulty in covering the vast territory of the different ridings. This League will always be indebted to the

candidates for their heroic efforts, and for the part played by them in pioneering a movement which must result for good in the future politics of the country.

No discouragement was felt over the result and the Executive again met and decided to carry on organizing, which had been interfered with during the election. So far this year, though hampered by bad weather, the results obtained convince us that the movement will make more rapid headway than ever before. Our work for the next two years must be largely educational. Steady and persistent effort will again be needed and with careful management a good surplus in funds should be placed on deposit for future campaign purposes.

The financial report given you covers the whole period since the inception of the movement in Alberta to the end of 1917. During this time twelve Executive meetings have been held, several of which lasted two days, the elections entailing quite an amount of extra work. Your Executive also at different times has made representations to the Dominion Government, by resolutions passed, respecting the coal situation, the regulation of the price of wheat, vacant lands held out of productive use, on the natural resources, taxation of exempted lands, State control of public utilities, the protective tariff, abolition of the liquor traffic, and electoral reform, which have been issued in pamphlet form and distributed broadcast.

We are suggesting that a new plan of organization for each provincial constituency be effected, the idea in mind being to keep the aims of the organization alive and well to the fore in those constituencies where organized. We are suggesting a Board of Control be elected, one member from each constituency having two hundred membership, to be selected at a convention to be held in the constituency, and for a local committee to be then formed from the different points. This would enable our speakers to conduct a series of meetings at different times in these constituencies, and ensure better advertising and attendance, thus making more effective use of our material. A commencement could be made at once in six constituencies, and in a few months this number could be doubled. Our aim is to ensure direct representation from every district as soon as satisfactory number of members has been obtained. If this is adopted, a small Executive consisting of a President and first and second Vice-Presidents should be selected to carry on the detailed work of the organization. It would also necessitate an amended constitution, and to this end we would recommend that you appoint a committee to draft same and submit for approval at each convention held in the local constituencies.

We have directed this movement to the best of our knowledge and ability, and wish to say to the members that our faith in its ultimate success is stronger to-day than ever. We trust the new Executive will take up the work with enthusiasm, and that they will profit by our experience. The initiating, launching and guiding of such a movement has been fraught with many difficulties. It has been found necessary to blaze new trails, to overcome barriers never anticipated by theorists, but after a year's experience we are convinced that the scheme is a practical one, and having discovered by experience the best methods to adopt, we thus leave to our successors in Executive capacity an open road to the attainment of the economic and democratic ideals of the League.

We wish to express appreciation of the valuable services rendered by our Secretary and Head Organizer. Both are devoted to the cause, and have been indefatigable workers and indispensable to the success attained. Needless to say, a movement of this character must have its educators, agitators and organizers. Farmers do not separate themselves from \$15 for political purposes without asking questions and being thoroughly convinced and satisfied with the answers. For farmers to-day are politically more alive than any other organized group in the Dominion. In doing our educational and propaganda work, both from the platform and through pamphlet and paper, Wm. Irvine has rendered inestimable service. In rugged and stormy days his faith in the cause has never been diminished, and his fearless propaganda has contributed immeasurably to the success achieved.

Were the League to cease as a political factor at the present moment, it has already accomplished a service to our Province great enough to amply repay the expenditure of effort and money involved. While we tabulate the data, count our members, and audit our books, yet it is impossible to estimate the value of the influence upon public opinion of the Non-Partisan spirit that has been injected into our public life. Our collective effort has been amply rewarded by the presence on the floor of the Provincial Legislature of at least two members untrammelled by party influence.

The policy promulgated has been carefully and deliberately thought out. The utmost has been made of the resources at hand. Unlooked-for problems have had to be grappled with, and from the foundations laid comprehensive plans can now be evolved for the building in the future of a political structure in this Province that will be unassailable.

The first year has but cleared the brush from the ground, and with the death of the old civilization in view, each year's work must be a definite layer towards the reconstruction of the future. Old ideas are rapidly disappearing. Prejudice and preconceived notions are being shattered. It is now evident to all that there must be no patch-work in the future. Social protection must be given to every individual, young or old, in the community. A healthy life and a happy existence are the requisites of citizenship to-day; and democratic control of industry and the devoting of surplus wealth to the common good is imperative towards this end.

Demobilization will bring problems with which only a well organized community can deal effectively, and with appreciation of what is needed and what is practicable in the economic as well as in the political realm, much can be done along the lines we have laid down to bring about a control of society, and an up-building in its standard of living which will redound more to the credit of Alberta than could many millions spent in its advertising.

Further, in such an undertaking, a throb of sympathy can be felt from the trenches in France and Flanders, where our brave boys have gone forth in the light of a democratic ideal, and laid down their lives upon the altar of the world that kaiserism and autocracy in every form may be obliterated. We, who must keep the home fires burning, must also not lose sight of this democratic ideal, and our every effort should be given towards establishing—for the home-coming of those who survive the battle, and for the children of those who have fallen—a democracy that will be worthy of the name, and of the immense sacrifices made. For while partyism survives in our Government, and

individual profiteering overshadows the common interest of our people, the fight our men are making will be in vain.

In closing our report, we appeal to our members at large to volunteer their services and co-operate with the Executive in the coming year to the end that Alberta, and the Dominion of Canada also, may be made "safe for democracy."

(Signed)

H. L. WILSON, (Chairman)  
On behalf of Executive Committee.

#### SECRETARY'S REPORT

To Our Members:

In presenting my report for your approval, I wish to state that, notwithstanding the numerous difficulties to be surmounted in establishing a new movement, I have found much pleasure in the work, through being convinced that a public service was being rendered, and that I was helping a movement destined to be a permanent factor in the history of our country.

Associated from the outset with your previous Secretary, Wm. Irvine, and those who with him determined to launch this movement in Alberta, I have shared the usual anathema and bitterness a new political movement would receive from the orthodox party politicians and their supporters. Always realizing the responsibilities of the position, I often experienced inward fears lest we were attempting more than could be accomplished in endeavoring to establish an independent political organization. But the principles and aims of our League being in accord with the spirit of our time, one feels while working that it is worthy the investment of every ounce of one's intellect and physical energy. After a year of hard struggle, we have succeeded in living down the suspicions of both press and public, and our organization is already making its influence felt for good in our public life. The League has also sent a vanguard of the future democratic parliament to Edmonton.

Taking charge of the Secretarial duties on the eve of the Provincial election, I soon realized that my strength would be taxed to the utmost, but the result of that election gladdened the hearts of those connected with the movement, enabled all to take fresh courage, and even though a heavy deficit in funds had to be faced, yet there was no sign of wavering, fresh plans being at once laid to bring new life into the organizing work in the field.

During July the favor met with by our organizers showed plainly the general disgust with party politics, and it was found that the farmers would readily ally themselves with a movement which gave expression to that which had been in their minds for a long time. This was argument conclusive for making plans to push the organization more rapidly, and in view of the near approach of the Federal election, the Executive in August decided to obtain men and cars, and selected the different districts to be canvassed.

In addition, H. W. Johnson was appointed to take charge of the organizing work in the field. For the two months of September and October rapid headway was made, but later the severe weather and arrangements that had to be made for the election, caused an almost complete cessation of work. In that short time, however, ten cars were fully paid for, assistance was given in a bye-election at Camrose, and a good campaign fund established for Federal purposes.

How the League fared in the Federal campaign need not be recapitulated. The means of election adopted by the Govern-

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ment and the Win-the-War election cry submerged the Non-Partisan principles on which the League was founded. However, in a democratic organization the members themselves must decide the course to be taken. At each convention held an entry into the fight was decided upon, candidates were adopted and placed in the field. There has been very slight disapproval by the members, and since the election many have recognized that the only course open was followed in carrying through to the end.

The campaign secured for the League a much needed amount of publicity, it demonstrated the ability of the farmers to manage and finance their own campaigns, it proved their candidates were the equal and even better than the old line party candidates, it found a number of enthusiastic and willing workers, and learned that under normal conditions there could be no shadow of doubt that success would attend its efforts wherever the aims and objects of the movement had been well propagated.

Not in the least discouraged, the Executive met and decided to "carry on." The handling of the funds was approved, and arrangements made for organizing work which had been interfered with, to be again taken up. Work has since gone steadily ahead, and the prospects for the future are bright indeed.

The League will greatly miss the services of Harry Johnson as Head Organizer. He has undoubtedly been the "warhorse" of the movement, and in early days undauntedly faced the difficulties encountered in the field and the discouragements met with in establishing the League. He has a remarkable fund of knowledge on all problems affecting the welfare of the farmer and has developed into an effective speaker. In his successor, B. C. Moore, we have a reliable and steady worker and one who has already proven his worth in the field. Consistent workers are always strong factors in the success of any undertaking, and in this respect P. P. Burdick, of our organizers, has been indefatigable in his efforts for the success of the League.

Regarding the expenditure of the membership fee for the information of members who contribute, while no fixed rule can be laid down, the idea followed is to devote \$5 to organizing work; \$5 for educational work, that is to meetings, speakers, travelling expenses, pamphlets, paper, salaries and office expenses; and \$5 for campaign purposes. Elections cannot be fought successfully without ample funds, and to ensure future success this latter amount should be the first essential to be set aside.

The initial work in opening up a district is most expensive, and should it prove to be unfavorable ground, this rule cannot be strictly followed. The only effective way to secure members has been found to be, to provide men with cars, pay sufficient commission for a living wage, and send them to interview the farmer at his own home. Certain defined townships are allotted each man, and returns must be given of at least eighty per cent. of the residents. While some have made good, yet several had to quit for easier work. It must be remembered that when the League furnishes an auto, the organizer has to pay expenses of all repairs and gasoline, hotel expenses, and earn a sufficient surplus to keep his home going, out of the \$4 per member allowed for those signed. The fact that a large number of members pay postdated cheques, on which commission cannot be allowed until honored at the bank, also goes to keep the earnings of the organizers down to a bare minimum.

All initiative work in establishing a new movement is expensive, and a system of organization for each constituency can be elaborated for the future which will go far to reduce expenses to a minimum, and also make more effective use of our speakers and propaganda work. A continual and aggressive campaign of educational work, however, must be kept going, and as the membership increases expenditure will increase. But the flag of Non-Partisanship must be kept flying. Strenuous times are ahead, for real opposition will come when the interests we are opposing get to realize the strength of our organization.

But with the united effort and co-operation of members we can win. In both Claresholm and Nanton, where our members were elected, the membership has been considerably increased. Already in four constituencies of cabinet ministers, there is now a stronger membership than both Mrs. McKinney and James Weir were favored with in their successful fight. Every week there is a quickening response to our efforts, and we go forward convinced of the justice of our cause.

Applications to open up organizing work are coming from all parts of the Province—from Milk River in the south to Athabasca in the north—but organization must first be completed in those constituencies that are only partially done at present. At least ten constituencies should be made "safe" this year, our membership should be easily doubled, and a good campaign fund again established. We are more experienced and stronger in every way, and the future is ours. If over sixteen thousand farmers can be organized in the U.F.A. for co-operative purposes, surely the same can be done for the more vitally important purpose of securing good government.

We are now much more efficient in our office, and I am indebted to the invaluable assistance given by our auditor, Mr. J. G. Tooker, who has taken infinite pains in supervising the book-keeping.

The League has an able defender in Wm. Irvine. It is certain he has had, with H. W. Johnson, the lion's share in establishing the movement and pioneering the course it has taken. The paper, "THE ALBERTA NON-PARTISAN," also will render much more service in future, and develop as time goes on. While we can do much, yet the spirit of the League can only be found out on the broad prairies, and the future rests entirely upon the co-operation and solidarity of the members.

The League has been fortunate in the choice made of an Executive. The desire uppermost at all times has been to make the organization "go," and not one, I am convinced, will ever regret the time and effort expended in planting the seed of a movement which now has untold possibilities for the giving of more abundant life to those who toil in this fair Province of ours.

Respectfully yours,  
J. H. FORD, Secretary.

\* \* \*

#### THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM.

Everybody agrees that shortage of food and the weariness of the queue are the chief fomentors of trouble in the Labor world and of the desire for peace that has taken hold of the people. With all his imagination, Swift could not have realized as vividly as the dullest clod in Britain now realizes, that "whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together."—A. M. THOMPSON.

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REPORT OF ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE  
ALBERTA

Held in Paget Hall, Calgary, March 20

Morning Session

The proceedings opened at 11.30 a.m., Mr. Wilson calling the Convention to order. W. D. Trego, Second Vice-President of the U.F.A., in a few well-chosen remarks opened the Convention.

Election of Chairman

Mr. Wilson requested the Convention to select a chairman. Chas. England proposed that Lee Wilson act again as Chairman. W. D. Trego seconded. Carried unanimously.

Secretary read letters and telegrams regretting inability to be present from Mrs. Haight, President of the Women's Grain Growers' Association of Saskatchewan, Mrs. McNaughten, Past-President of the Women's G.G.A. of Sask., J. W. Wilford, member of the Executive, away in Illinois, E. E. Sparks, member of the Executive, who could not get in owing to wash-outs on roads.

Report of Secretary Adopted

The Secretary was called upon to give his report to the Convention. The report was adopted.

Financial Statement Presented

Mr. Sly then presented the Financial Report, from inception of League to Dec. 31, 1917, and explained each item of expenditure. He paid a high compliment to the officials connected with the League for the splendid report, and stated that this Convention though small in numbers, was making history in Canada, through its being the only political organization that could present a statement of all money received for political purposes, and the source from which it was derived, and give an itemized statement of the expenditure. He emphasized that if any point was not clear to the members, the book-keeper was present with the books of the League, and any item questioned could be investigated and explanation given.

Several questions asked regarding returned checks on hand, the Secretary stated efforts were still being made to collect, and explained methods adopted; also cost of the Provincial election campaigns, which Secretary stated was approximately \$300 each. Mr. Weir here interposed with the remark that from the Public Accounts in the House at Edmonton, he found the Government had spent four, five and six thousand dollars in many constituencies.

Mr. Boissevain thought the fact that the League having done all the work shown in reports and still having assets amounting to \$12,000 was very fine indeed.

Mr. Buckley appealed to members to speak out. We wanted inquiry and could satisfy the most fastidious critic.

On motion of Mr. Weir, seconded by Mr. Lyon, report was adopted unanimously. Mr. Sims, of Vulcan, in support, thought the thanks of the convention was due to those responsible for the manner in which the funds had been handled.

Mr. Weir moved adjournment for lunch.

Afternoon Session

Executive Report

Meeting at 2 p.m. Mr. Johnson gave report of the Executive, which covered the operations of the League from the commencement, Dec. 2nd, 1916, to Dec. 31st, 1917. He thought discussion would centre upon this report, covering as it did a wide range, and also embodying a plan of re-organization.

Mr. McDougall, of Pincher Creek, moved adoption of report, seconded by Mr. Shaw, of Carlsland.

After being questioned as to the qualification for membership, and regarding organization, it was asked what provision was made in Constitution for election of Executive.

Secretary stated that two of the Executive were elected for three years, Mr. Wilford and Mr. Sparks; two for two years, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Johnson; the others, Mr. Buckley and Mr. Sly, for one year. Since then two were added, Mr. McGlenning and Mr. Marshall. The Executive numbered eight and all had agreed to stand for re-election.

Mr. Galbraith thought the idea of two and three-year terms very good, as it ensured continuity of policy. He would deplore the election of an entirely new Executive, and proposed that the four elected for the two and three year terms be still retained. This suggestion was agreed to.

Executive Recommendation

Mr. Marshall then moved the following resolution:

"That this convention elect an Executive of five, to carry on the work of the League until twelve provincial constituencies have been organized to the extent of two hundred membership each; local convention then to be held in each constituency to elect a member to a Board of Management for this League; and for such Board to then elect an Executive to supersede the Executive elected by this Convention."

Mr. Buckley seconded. In discussion it was thought an Executive of five was too small, and that each district where any considerable number of members had been organized should be represented. Secretary explained the Board of management suggested in the Executive report made provision for such representation. All that was needed was to elect a sufficient number to carry on the work two or three months until that Board could be elected from the local conventions, and an executive representative of different districts could then be chosen by the Board.

Mr. McDougall moved amendment, that resolution be referred to a Resolution Committee to re-draft. Geo. Bevington, Winterburn, seconded. Committee appointed were Messrs. W. H. Irwin, H. A. McGlenning, Geo. Bevington, Chas. England and Wm. Irvine. Committee retired.

Questions Asked and Answered

Mr. Bennett of Magrath stated he was present on behalf of several members, and requested replies to a number of questions regarding methods of advertising local meetings, how many leaders of the U.F.A. were members of the League, how long membership the \$15 fee gave, etc. Mr. Johnson in reply considered the rank and file the real leaders of the U.F.A. and mentioned Messrs. Trego, Leedy and Weir as members of the League who had served the U.F.A. in executive capacity. The fee was for an indefinite time.

In reply to a question, secretary explained that fee only included one-year's

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subscription to paper. It would be impossible for paper to go on forever on one fee, and new Executive would deal with the question.

Further questions were answered satisfactorily by Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bennett expressing his appreciation.

### Amended Constitution

On the question of amended Constitution, Mrs. McKinney moved, Mr. Galbraith seconded, that a committee to amend Constitution be appointed by the Executive. Mrs. McKinney explained that the Executive would have a better knowledge of those who would be qualified to do such work.

### Reorganization Resolution

Mr. Irwin brought in resolution on reorganization from Committee, which included giving power to local conventions to draft their own constitutions. Mrs. McKinney moved amendment to omit clause referring to Constitution for each constituency, stating it would cause confusion. Mr. Boissevain seconded. Mr. Weir also approving, and several expressions came from members in support. The amendment was carried.

Mr. W. H. Irwin then moved, Mr. McDougall seconded, that each local organization for each constituency, should be allowed to draft its own bye-laws. Carried. The amended resolution follows:

"That each constituency be called upon to form a local organization as soon as a membership of two hundred has been reached.

"That a convention for this purpose be called by the Central Executive and that an Executive be elected, of seven, to work in conjunction with the Organizer in promoting the interests of the League. That the local convention also select candidates to contest elections, forward resolutions to central executive regarding policy, etc., and that each local organization be permitted to draft its own bye-laws subject to the approval of the central Executive; and elect delegates to annual convention.

"That the central Executive of the League consist of seven members to be elected according to the Constitution."

### Returned Soldier Problem

Mr. Irvine then read a resolution regarding the returned soldier problem: Mrs. McKinney asked for careful consideration of the resolution before adoption, stating she was not in favor of clause regarding colonization, which she considered impracticable. Mr. Irvine spoke favoring resolution, and Mr. Buckley moved, Mr. Trego seconding, substitution of an equal pension clause for colonization clause. Dr. McMillan, of Granum, supported Mr. Irvine's colonization proposal. Mr. Galbraith, in support, favored taking land near railways, and from the speculators, and thought resolution could be altered requesting the Government to take such land and cultivate for production, so as to be ready to establish colonies. Messrs. Weir and Johnson spoke in favor, and Committee was asked to endeavor to revise the resolution.

The Convention adjourned until 7.30.

### Evening Session

Meeting at 7.30, the first business taken was nominations for three members to Executive. According to the recommendation of Resolution Committee, adopted during the afternoon by the Convention, only three members were to be elected, the remaining members being Messrs. Wilford, Sparks, Wilson and Johnson. Mr. Wilson was dubious about giving time to the duties but upon pressure from members, agreed to act for another year. Mr. Sly, of Strathmore, had also signified intention of resigning, through not being able to give the necessary time to the duties.

### Executive Re-elected

On nominations being called for, Mr. Weir moved, Mr. Lyon seconded, J. C. Buckley. Mr. England moved, Mr. Malchow seconded, Mr. Marshall. Mr. McDougall moved, Mr. Marshall seconded, Mr. McGlenning.

Mr. Marshall thought, that as he lived close to Mr. Wilford, a member representing some other district should be nominated in his place. Mr. McGlenning also offered to withdraw in favor of new blood. He testified to the pleasure the work had always given him, but thought that someone more in touch with the members to the east of his district would be better in his place.

Mr. Weir said that since his election he had given close attention to the administrative work of the Executive, and had been present at several of their meetings. He did not think a single one could be bettered, and he advised at this stage of the League's progress, that the work should be carried on by them for at least another year. He regretted Mr. Sly was not continuing, for he was a most valuable man.

No further nominations being forthcoming, Messrs. Buckley, Marshall and McGlenning were elected unanimously.

Mr. Galbraith wanted it understood that the one, two and three year plan would be continued, and that these three members were elected for the three-year term. The Convention agreed.

### Amended Resolution

The amended resolution on the returned soldier problem was then presented to the convention, and after short discussion Mrs. McKinney and others expressing approval, was adopted unanimously.

"Whereas the country is facing a serious problem in relation to the assimilation of the returned soldier into common life, and

"Whereas the Government has taken steps toward the colonization of soldiers, "Be it Resolved, that this Non-Partisan League of Alberta, in convention assembled go on record as opposed to any colonization scheme for soldiers,

"And that they request the Government to appropriate the best idle lands in the Dominion of Canada, and those nearest to railway facilities, at the original purchase price, plus bank interest on the original investment, from date of purchase to the time at which the Government assumes ownership. Such land to be utilized in increasing production, the same land to be thus prepared for the use of the soldier in case any colonization scheme is adopted.

"And that pensions, if granted at all, be granted equally to all soldiers regardless of rank."

### Banking Resolution

A resolution was then presented regarding establishing of banks by Provincial Government. Mr. McDougall moved adoption, Mr. McGlenning seconded. Mr. Bevington, being sponsor for the resolution, then explained the nature of the same. After some discussion Mrs. McKinney again advised caution, and moved that resolution be referred to the Executive for their full consideration. She stated she did not wish the League to adopt any measure hastily without being fully satisfied it was possible that same could be carried into effect. Mr. Weir seconded. Carried unanimously.

### The League in the Legislature

The Chairman then called upon the two Members for resume of their work in the Legislature.

### Mrs. McKinney

Mrs. McKinney, after dealing with speech from the throne, stated the request to advise the Dominion Government to take the duty off farm machinery as a war measure, first came from the Non-Partisans. She stated that nothing wonderful was being done, but they were learning, and one thing she had already learnt was, that whatever legislation was wanted had to be ready before the session opened, and that it was necessary to have some organization or powers to be ready to back up the effort made.

It was most necessary to be watchful of the bills, and to criticize them, because some were very innocent looking. Many were passed hurriedly and then had to be amended.

The Supplementary Revenue Act established a new principle in taxation. The Provincial Government never before levying a direct tax upon persons for Provincial revenue. It was levied on the owners of land, and one mill on the assessable property in towns; business, salaries, incomes, went untouched. It was not even. It fell heavier on the farmer. She did not think provision for the feeble-minded should be neglected longer.

No independent could carry into effect legislation, because anything that was not a Government measure had little chance of getting through, but despite that, she would not wish to be in any place in the House, but in the Independent seats.

The work before them was to get people imbued with the spirit of independence, and stick at it until the people got what they want. The very fact that there was a sufficiently strong independent sentiment to place five members in the Legislature means more than we will ever know. It was the beginning of things, and our part was to patiently move right along until we got what was wanted. We must just organize and stick to our guns.

She appealed for suggestions regarding legislation from any member of the League.

### Mr. Jas. Weir

Mr. Weir dealt more especially with special privileges to the Trust companies and had found the late Premier's name and those of many of his relatives, identified with those that are licensed. He spoke of the difficulty in getting the names of the directors of those companies, but he intended to pursue his investigations. He referred to the bills being dallied along for

days, and stated the Public Accounts should be printed before the Session opens, and not after the Session, as is now done. There was an enormous book of records in pen and ink writing, with multitudinous entries. No one, not even a Philadelphia lawyer could find the information he wanted from that enormous book.

In looking over Civil Service List he found two ministers of the Cabinet had thirty-two relatives in the public service. The returned soldiers were at the bottom of the list, having the poorest jobs with the smallest pay given to public servants. The Civil Service list cost about \$750,000 a year; this for a population about as great as that of Toronto. The Session cost \$125,000.

He dealt with the mismanagement of the Provincial police, ridiculed the show of independence made by the "Partisans", and showed the need of real aggressiveness in the House.

#### Appreciation

After the addresses, Mr. Buckley moved that the Convention place on record appreciation of the services the League Members were rendering in the Legislature. Mr. Boissevain seconded, and the motion was carried by a standing vote of the delegates. Mrs. McKinney and Mr. Weir returned thanks, Mr. Weir stating he appreciated that motion from a sincere few a thousand times more than columns of newspaper approval, or pats on the back from those in the seats of the mighty. He was working for the common people.

#### The Breach is Made

Mr. W. H. Irwin, of Lomond, being called upon, thought that the proceedings of the convention were momentous. It was a link with the powers that will be in the future. The breach is made, the opening is widening. We must all do our best to give it a push and send it right through. It was the essential principle that must ever be kept to the front, to get rid of the nigger in the fence in party politics, who dealt out the money behind the scenes and then determined the legislation. It was just as necessary to establish democracy at home as abroad.

#### Build Strong and Build Well

Mr. Wm. Irvine in a few words, said those who had been associated with the movement had accomplished something in getting people like Mrs. McKinney and Mr. Weir in the Legislature, as a precursor of the democracy referred to by Mr. Irwin. They were not only attacking partyism, but were constructing a positive kind of political thinking.

The solidarity of the structure built was of far more importance than the speed with which it was constructed, and to convince the people of the Province of the great value of our principles the foundations must be laid deep and strong. Let us build strong and build well. Nothing worth while can be built overnight. It meant long hard working for. He would say stay with it, and ultimately we shall have the democracy that all are yearning for.

The proceedings came to a close at 10.30 p.m.

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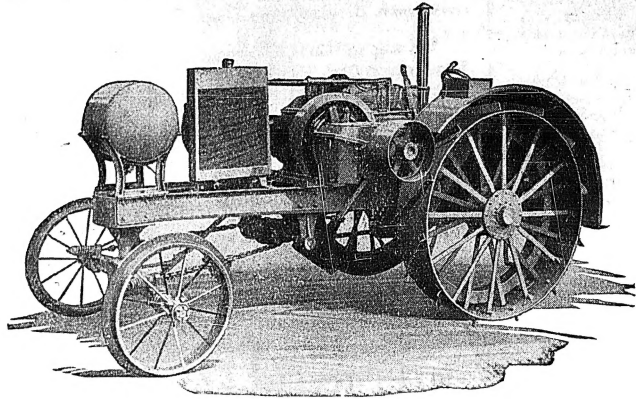
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